

HUMOR

# Fruits and Nuts

Embracing the "queerness" of your fellow travelers

I was talking with a rather well-connected friend of mine recently when he mentioned he knew a certain writer I admire.

My well-connected friend didn't know it, but not only do I admire this writer, I identify with her, as well; I feel like she gives voice to my secret self. I've always considered her something of a kindred spirit, actually—a "fellow traveler," as the communists used to say.

"What's she like?" I panted, hungry for details.

"Ach, she's a total nutbag," my friend said, rolling his eyes. "She's absolutely infuriating. She's temperamental, she's demanding, she's erratic. She drives everyone crazy."

Boy, am I glad I didn't mention the kindred spirit thing.

On the way home I got to thinking more about it, and I realized nearly all of my favorite artists—Dorothy Parker, Tennessee Williams, Judy Garland—were mentally unbalanced in one way or another. Y'know, it doesn't do a lot for your self-confidence when you realize most of the people you admire were institutionalized.

By the time I got home I was in tears. My partner looked at me and said, "What's wrong?" "All the people I identify with are looney-tunes," I cried.

"This is news?" he said.

Well, yeah. Since I no longer go out of my way to act wacky like I did when I was a needy, attention-starved kid, I somehow convinced myself I was a reasonably normal adult, kind of dull, even.

But now I have my doubts. Have you seen that commercial for the antidepressant with the cartoon of that sad-looking egg thing? I have, because it seems to be on during most of the shows I watch, which makes me worry per-

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARC

by Marc Acito



haps I'm part of some marketing effort aimed at reaching the depressed demographic.

I can just hear the guys on Madison Avenue: "Let's see, gay men ages 31 to 45 who watch *Ally McBeal* and *Will & Grace*. Oh yeah, those guys need all the pharmaceuticals money can buy."

They call us Mannish Depressives.

I myself am a magnet for the truly unhinged, partially because I've always subscribed to the theory that there's a very fine line separating the brilliant from the complete wackjobs. I guess it makes me approachable.

Doesn't matter where I am—on a bus, on line in the supermarket, at church—it's only a matter of time before somebody starts telling me about the voices only they can hear. (I'll say one thing for schizophrenics, though: They're rarely dull. If you don't like the personality you're talking to, stick around and they'll change it quicker than a stripper can whip off a G-string.)

Now I know being gay is no longer considered a mental illness, but, personally, I still

associate being queer with being a little, well, queer. Yet there's this whole cult of normality out there, a new emerging gay voice insisting we are just like straight people except we're better groomed.

I ask you, what fun is that?

We've got militant dykes being replaced by Stepford Lesbians and soccer moms in the 'burbs dropping the kids off at Boy Scouts (hello!) before heading to the PTA meeting. It's like an episode of *Leave It to Beaver*, and for more reasons than one, if you catch my drift.

I'm beginning to think queer activists finally started including trans people not because it was the right thing to do but because we were starting to look kinda dull without them. ("Quick,



we need somebody to freak the straight people out! Get me a trans person and fast!")

So if you find that your gay potlucks need some livening up, I suggest you trot out the old Magic Pill question, then sit back and watch the fur fly. Oh, you know the one: "If you could take a Magic Pill that would make you straight, would you?"

I guarantee you there's bound to be at least one fag who will say: "Absolutely. I mean, who would choose to be gay? Anybody who'd choose to be an oppressed minority has got to be crazy."

Well, I guess that does make me crazy after all.

Listen, if being gay is something you only do from the waist down, that's your prerogative. And if you want to be as boring as most straight people, by all means, go ahead. But as for me, I'm sticking with the Fruits and the Nuts.

Who would choose to be gay?

Oh, me, me, me! Pick me!

And that, my friends, is *The Gospel According to Marc*. [E]

MARC ACITO has pushed his boyfriend to the brink of insanity as well. He can be reached at [marcacito@attbi.com](mailto:marcacito@attbi.com).

**OREGON SYMPHONY**  
James DePreist, Music Director & Conductor

**A ROMANTIC NIGHT IN VIENNA**  
"A Concert for Lovers"

Thursday, February 14 at 7:30 pm

Norman Leyden, conductor  
Lisa Vroman, vocalist

Treat your sweetheart to an evening of Viennese waltzes and other beautiful music perfect for this most romantic of holidays!

Tickets start at \$25

Sponsored by the **Andrianoff Family**  
Media support by **K103 fm**



**FOR TICKETS AND INFORMATION:**  
Call 503-228-1353 | 1-800-228-7343 | Mon - Sat, 9 am - 5 pm  
[www.orsymphony.org](http://www.orsymphony.org) | 503-790-ARTS (service charge may apply)  
Group rates available on most concerts. Call 503-228-1353

**ARLENE SCHNITZER CONCERT HALL**  
SW Main & Broadway • Portland Center for the Performing Arts

**STARK RAVING THEATRE**

Dan dreams of loving his woman, his man, and his God.

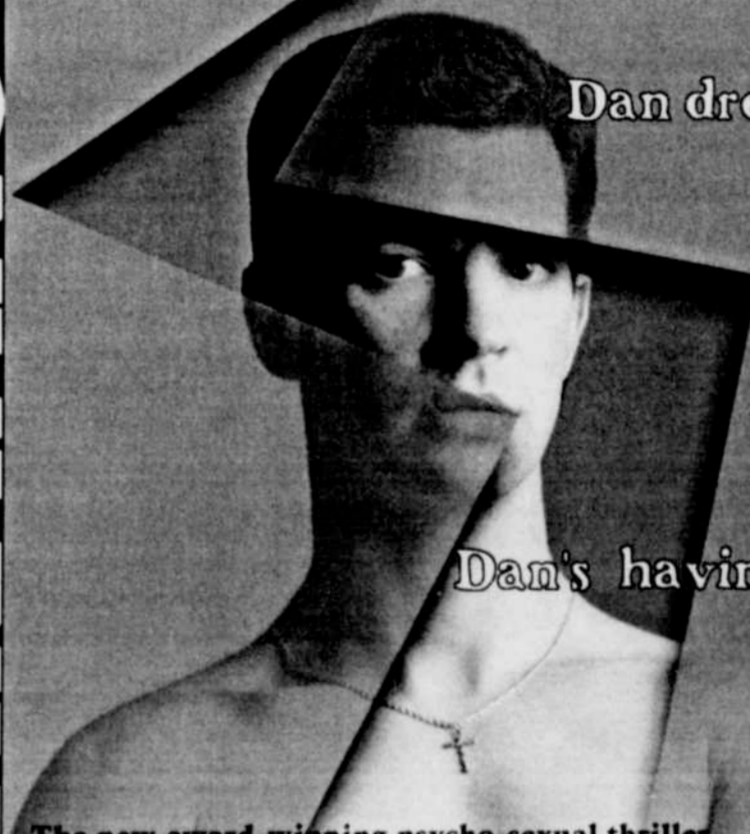
Dan's having nightmares.

The new award-winning psycho-sexual thriller from gay playwright Matthew B. Zrebski.

**After the zipper**

proudly sponsored by **justout**

WORLD PREMIERE, February 1 - March 2, 2002  
2257 NW Raleigh • Portland, OR • call for reservations: (503) 232-7072  
Portland's Home for Provocative New Works • [www.StarkRavingTheatre.org](http://www.StarkRavingTheatre.org)



**WHERE'S TOTO?**

LESBIAN PERFORMER DOROTHY A. HIRSCH'S  
WILD ONE-WOMAN COMEDY

**STARK RAVING** Fridays and Saturdays following *After the Zipper*  
February 2 - March 2, 2002 10:30 pm

